

PIOTR EBERHARDT

Leszczycki Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization
Polish Academy of Sciences

THE IZBORSK CLUB AND THEIR GEOPOLITICAL PHANTASMAGORIAS

Abstract

This article presents the activities of the Izborsk Club. The Club is an organization established in 2012 in the Russian town of Izborsk, near Pskov. It brings together leading Russian intellectuals—mainly political scientists, specialists in geopolitics, and geographers. The organization's task is to prepare analytical studies on the geopolitical situation of Russia and its strategic plans for the future. This article comments in detail on one of the Club's basic documents concerning the political future of Central Eastern Europe. The document proposes great geopolitical transformations, including changes in political boundaries, and important shifts in the political landscape of this part of Europe. The purpose of the transformations is to strengthen the imperial power of Russia and to divide Central Eastern Europe into Russian and German zones of influence. The author of the article considers the document to be irresponsible and adventure-seeking. Three original maps drawn by activists of the Izborsk Club are appended. They present the geographical shape of the postulated changes of boundaries on the territory situated between the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, and Adriatic. Most Russians accept the current status, though, and they view such projects, which aim to recreate the past, inimically or with important reservations.

Keywords: Russia, Central Eastern Europe, Izborsk Club, geopolitical ideas, changes in political borders.

Many Russian geographers, political scientists, and historians cannot accustom themselves to the disintegration of the USSR and to the loss of many of the provinces that previously belonged

to the Russian (or Soviet) empire. They treat this phenomenon as an episode violating the laws of history and historical justice. In their opinion, such a deviation from the proper path of development ought to be corrected and the respective territories must—sooner or later—be reincorporated into Russia. In order to fulfill this historical necessity, appropriate political steps should be taken; Russia must be prepared, at the appropriate instant, to unleash military intervention. Within the framework of this goal-oriented program aimed at reconstructing the historical empire, there is a need to prepare Russian society—materially and psychologically. The task requires numerous organizations and para-scientific societies to create an atmosphere conducive to supporting all kinds of revisionist movements with regard to present-day Russia's closer and more distant neighbors. At the same time, it is necessary to have ready arguments to justify undertakings to realize this grand program, which consists in the rebuilding of the Russian empire with optimal political boundaries. Depending upon the development of political situations in the future, the best scenarios should be chosen.

All such ideological-territorial projects should be analyzed in as objective a manner as possible. They are, by definition, almost always dangerous, as they principally question the geopolitical status quo. They treat existing international agreements with complete disregard. The current political order is to be destroyed in the name of ideological visions construed and pursued on the basis of nationalism and Great-Russian chauvinism. From the geographical standpoint, these concepts have, in principle, a territorially unbound scale, but they primarily concern areas that were—in the distant or more recent past—under the domination of the authorities of tsarist St. Petersburg or the Soviet capital, Moscow. These areas are presently outside the Russian Federation and their formal political status is legally normalized. Yet the agreements that have been established concerning borders and territorial appurtenances do not satisfy some Russians.

The above-mentioned designs are voiced publicly and do not evoke protest or moral disapproval in Russia. To the contrary, they are increasingly accepted by Russian society, which is tending to become convinced they are sound and justified. It is held that the change of political borders and the subordination of areas that had been the parts of the USSR constitutes the sole way

to compensate for the wrongs the Russian people have had to suffer. This reasoning does not take either legal principles or political consequences into account. The opinions of the nations that are meant to be subordinated are not considered either. An image is being created in which the potential citizens of a future Great Russia expect such incorporation as an act of liberation. The image is, as a rule, false. Yet the fact should not be overlooked that the areas in question are inhabited by numerous former citizens of the Soviet empire, including many Russians or persons of other ethnic origin who speak the Russian language. Among them quite a number can be found who would opt for the solution proposed by the Izborsk Club. This fact is regarded by Russians who have nationalist and imperialist views as an argument for the need to return to the state that existed before the empire disintegrated.

Organizations that feed on slogans of revenge and repairing wrongs emerge and produce more or less formalized study teams, which develop concrete postulates or concepts casting doubt on present-day borders and supporting change in the political affiliation of particular provinces or border-adjacent regions. Their primary object of interest is in Europe, and especially within the area situated between the Black Sea and the Baltic. During the last one hundred years the most important political changes have occurred within this territory. Several times the territory has been dominated—either in total or in part—by the Russian or Soviet empire. Currently, the political status of the states constituting this territory is formally regulated and officially acknowledged by the Russian Federation. For numerous activists and Russian organizations, though, this is merely a transitory situation, which in the course of further political transformations—political or military—ought to undergo a radical change.

It is expected that geopolitical alterations to the areas in question will take place as the effect of spontaneous or organized social revolts. The intervention of Russian military forces is not excluded either, though. In order to provide a motivation for these future potential political or military activities, various historical, strategic, economic, or cultural-and-ethnic arguments are being elaborated. They are meant to be used as need arises, depending on the situation that might come to life in the future. These arguments and scenarios are prepared primarily for the state authorities, but they

also have a propaganda appeal, serving the mobilization of Russian society around nationalistic slogans and political revenge motifs.¹

Ancient political facts constitute the starting point for the political concepts formulated. Thus, it is noted that the disintegration of the tsarist empire—and then the Soviet one—did not take place in accordance with the rules of international law but owing to unconstitutional coups. Therefore, among the revisionist projects, there is one postulating the revival of a (new) empire with the boundaries of the Russian Empire as of 1914—or of the Soviet Union as of 1989. In spite of the legal absurdity of such arguments, they are brought forth in many postulates. In the first of these historical variants, it is emphasized that the borders of the Russian Empire of 1914 were established through the decisions of the Vienna Treaty of 1815. They were politically justified and guaranteed one hundred years of (relative) peace in Europe.² They formed the European order, and the western borders of Russia were rational. The return to this—or an approximate—status would be optimal for Russia, Germany, and the whole of Europe. When assessing the positive features of this pattern of boundaries, attention is turned to the new conditions, which require potential corrections. Thus, bringing back the status from before World War I would require Russia to give up, to the benefit of Germany, the Kaliningrad district, which only became “Russian” after 1945 and an “Eastern Orthodox area” after 1989. Another doubtful area is that of eastern Galicia, which did not belong to the tsarist Russian empire but was later a part of the USSR. This territory is also indicated to be truly “Russian” ground, but it has recently become a Ukrainian “Bandera-ist” area. Thus, its future status is quite debatable.

The issue of autonomy for Finland and for central Poland with Warsaw—the latter capital having been within the boundaries of tsarist Russia for more than one hundred years—would be resolved bilaterally as an internal Russian affair, but agreed upon with the Germans.

Actually, the variant with the boundaries of Russia of 1914 is not really treated too literally, and is brought back mainly to show

¹ A more complete account on the views formulated and promoted by Russian activists of the nationalist orientation is provided in several books by Polish authors (de Lazari, 1994; Bäcker, 2007; Potulski, 2010).

² The idea of restoring the borders of the Russian Empire (including central Poland and Finland) was argued by Russian political writer Alexander Shirokorad (2006).

Russian territorial losses. On the other hand, setting the boundaries as of 1989, and the restoration of the boundaries of the Soviet Union, is referred to in numerous documents signed by social organizations and the public authorities of present-day Russia. Within the framework of this concept various boundary outlines are being elaborated and presented. The more maximalist ones call for a return to the boundaries established in 1945 in Yalta and in Potsdam, while the more moderate ones aim at unification—according to Solzhenitsyn's concept—of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in one monolithic state.³ The issue of the future of the three Baltic states is accounted for in diverse variants, always with the provision that Russia is granted absolute access to the Baltic Sea.

Numerous Russian scholars, with geopolitical interests, are clustered in various groups and circles, as well as scientific or expert organizations, where they construe various visions of the future Europe and of Russia, as well as different concepts for the transformation of borders and territories, and the expansion of Russia. The substantive level of these concepts is diverse, as is their spatial and social reach.

The most well known and at the same time representative group of such scholars is the so-called Izborsk Club. As part of its activity, the Club elaborates various projections for the future.⁴ They concern the expected or postulated and designed changes in the political boundaries of countries situated in the vicinity of the Russian Federation. In the framework of these concepts, the Russian scholars assess the political boundaries of contemporary Poland. They are convinced that the territory of present-day Poland should undergo a substantial reduction. In their opinion, the present territory of Poland does not correspond to the contemporary—much less future—geopolitical conditions of the European continent.

Precisely for this reason it is not only advisable but necessary to present selected concepts—little known outside of Russia—of the Izborsk Club.

The Izborsk Club was organized in September 2012 by a group of political scientists who enjoy the opinion of being leading Russian

³ This idea was presented by Alexander Solzhenitsyn at the sitting of the Russian Duma on October 28, 1994 (Solzhenitsyn, 1994).

⁴ In Polish academic literature, the question of the Izborsk Club and its activities is not widely described. Konrad Świder wrote about the institution and its concepts about Ukraine. (Świder, 2015).

intellectuals, during celebrations of the 1150th anniversary of the town of Izborsk, which is situated close to the border with Estonia. The initiative gained the support of Andrei Turchak, governor of the Pskov district (within whose territory the town of Izborsk is located). The political writer Alexander Prokhanov was elected⁵ to be chairman of the Club, while Vitaliy Averyaniv, Alexander Nagornyi, and Oleg Rozanov were chosen as deputies. An essential substantive role in the Club is played by Alexander Gaponenko, who claims to represent the Russians inhabiting Latvia.⁶

The active members of the Club include, in particular, Alexander Ageyev, Zhoresa Alierova, Dmitriy Ayatskov, Sergey Batchikov, Vladimir Bortko, Sergey Glazyev, Leonid Ivashov, Valeriy Korovin,⁷ Mikhail Leontiev, Alexander Notin, and Nikolay Starikov. All either occupy high positions in the government or are lecturers at Russian universities. The Club started its activity by gaining significant financial means from the then central authorities of the Russian Federation. The members of the Club meet regularly in various cities of Russia. One of the plenary meetings took place in Donetsk, inside the territory of the occupied part of Ukraine. The Club issues regular publications containing the opinions of Club members. All of the members voice nationalistic, Russo-centric views idealizing the vision of a powerful imperialist Russia, the vision of imposing a Russian empire over the Euro-Asian continent. Military power should be reflected in territorial expansion and the regaining of core Russian areas lost in 1989 as the result of a coup organized by the West and carried out by Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Alexander Yakovlev, and Eduard Shevardnadze. The members of the Izborsk Club are inspired by the Eastern Orthodox religion and conservative imperial thought, and express enmity toward all kinds of liberal concepts. The task of the Club is to promote the principles of the new Russian imperial ideology, the so-called “Russian world” (*Russkiy*

⁵ Alexander Prokhanov is a well-known philosopher and political activist. The author of more than 30 books and short story collections, he is also the creator and editor of the journals *Den* and *Zavtra*. He is an opponent of Western ideology, an ultranationalist, and a supporter of Russia's alliance with China and the Muslim world (Prokhanov 2010, 2014).

⁶ Alexander Gaponenko claims in his CV to be of Latvian nationality, but is, in fact, a Russian nationalist.

⁷ Valeriy Korovin, like Alexander Prokhanov, is a known apologist of Joseph Stalin. He supports restoring the monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky in front of the Lubianka and of constructing a monument to Stalin in Moscow.

mir,⁸ *Pax Russica*). This idea justifies the existence of a separate Russian civilization, encompassing Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, and those nations that have adopted Russian culture, language, and the Great-Russian ideology. The opponent is constituted by the laicized world of the West, with its orientation toward consumption, moral relativism, and political correctness. A strong central authority, personalized by Vladimir Putin, is a guarantee that the development of Russia, after a period of turmoil (*smuta*), tends toward adequate political and military power. In the framework of the imperial doctrine the members of the Club are preparing ideological and strategic materials for the state authorities and propaganda materials for the mass media. Alexander Dugin,⁹ one of the leading Russian specialists in geopolitics, a supporter of Eurasianism, is also attached to the Club and participates in its activities, as does the well-known nationalist historian, Natalia Narochmitskaya.¹⁰ The attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church toward the movement embodied by the Club is very positive. The Church's representative in the Club is Bishop (Archimandrite) Tikhon (Georgiy Shevkunov), who is supervisor of the Moscow Monastery of the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God. The Izborsk Club tries to coordinate the activities of other organizations of a chauvinist character, in order to prevent differences of opinions concerning future plans for Russian foreign policy and expansionist undertakings.

It is not my purpose to consider here in detail the studies prepared by the various working groups functioning within the Club. I shall only present the official stance of the Izborsk Club, relative to its general premises as to the future of Central Eastern Europe, including Poland. It is not difficult to present this vision, since it has been very clearly formulated in an official document.¹¹ The document contains a cartographic illustration in the form of maps showing the

⁸ The meaning of the Russian word "*mir*" is broad; it signifies—as is quite to the point here—both "peace" and "world" (and also "community").

⁹ Author of a well-known book on geopolitics (Dugin 1999). The work and the views of Alexander Dugin were presented in another article by the present author: (Eberhardt 2010).

¹⁰ Natalia Narochmitskaya is a Russian politician, historian, and diplomat, and the author of several works dedicated to Russian history. In this book, she apotheosizes expansionism and the imperial policies of the Russian Empire and the USSR. She is chair of the commission for counteracting attempts to falsify Russian history (Narochmitskaya 2009).

¹¹ The document was prepared by Alexander Gaponenko (2017), and was then—without any mention of authorship—published as the official position of the Izborsk Club (Plan 2017).

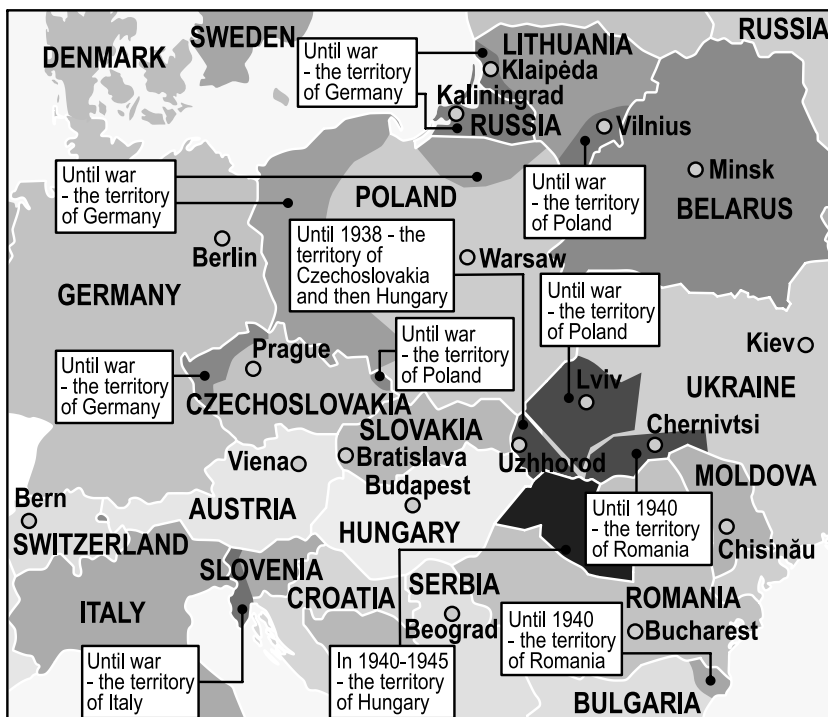
postulated future course of boundaries, notably those of Poland. The maps, along with the accompanying texts, have also been published online; the respective authors do not at all hide their political views. The plans are fully public and accessible. Their creators are apparently not concerned that in any democratic European country such views would be treated as the opinions of irresponsible extremists whose anachronistic visions do not correspond to 21st-century realities. The documents and pronouncements of the leading activists of the Izborsk Club are shocking—not solely from the political standpoint but also in the moral perspective. It is obvious that without a large-scale war and gigantic numbers of victims the postulated geopolitical transformations cannot be realized.

In its official document, before the Izborsk Club presents its desired corrections to the existing state boundaries in Central Eastern Europe, it presents the geopolitical changes that have taken place as a result of World War II. These are assessed in a highly critical manner—that is, in regard to the changes that took place after 1941. The changes that occurred earlier, in the years 1939–1941, that is, immediately after the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, are usually ignored, since they are viewed positively. Only the decisions that were taken in Potsdam in 1945 and that are associated with the movement of the Polish-German border to the west are subject to far-reaching criticism. It is known that a key role in these decisions was played by Joseph Stalin. Hence, the Club, indirectly, does not accept the Soviet policies of that time. This is a prerequisite for demonstrating the necessity of changes, which require an adequate historical justification. In order to show the scale of political transformations, an initial map of the territory situated between the Baltic Sea, Black Sea, and Adriatic (see Map no. 1) was provided in the said document, along with corresponding explanations in the Russian language. The map is entitled “How they Divided Europe after 1945,” and contains numerous compromising errors and imprecisions. Thus, for instance, the map does not show the Polish-Soviet border of the years 1921-1939, as established in the Treaty of Riga, but only the artificially separated territories of Eastern Galicia and the neighborhood of Vilna—which has no historical justification. The Czech borderland, incorporated by Hitler into Germany after the Pact of Munich and then regained by Czechoslovakia in 1945, had, in fact, a different territorial shape, and so forth. This, however, is not very important, because the creators of the map are not

aiming at historical precision and truth, but at demonstrating that the judgments implemented in 1945 were unjustified and that the previous state, that is, the one of June 22, 1941, should be brought back, at least in approximation.

Map 1

The territorial changes in Central Europe after 1945, according to the Izborsk Club



Another original map provided in the text, showing the political boundaries of a Europe of the future as postulated by the Club (see Map no. 2), is of higher importance. This map shows the area between Sicily and Lithuania. The main beneficiary of the changes suggested is Germany, since Poland loses to the benefit of Germany all the territories it gained in Potsdam (with the possible exception of Gdansk). The Russians of the Club are in this case so magnanimous that they give up—again for the benefit of Germany—the district of Kaliningrad, and suggest the restoration of East Prussia, even significantly enlarged, at the cost of Poland in the south and east. “Great Germany” is to border directly with Russia.

Map 2

Future borders in Central Europe, according to the Izborsk Club



since it is suggested that Belarus will be liquidated. Poland also loses the eastern part of the Lublin region, along with the area situated, approximately, between Przemyśl and Rzeszów, down to the border with Slovakia. The latter area is referred to on the map as “Chełm,” even though it never had anything to do with the proper region of Chełm, that is, Chełmszczyzna. It is possible that the authors of the map were thinking, not too precisely, about the so-called Chełm

Land, which the tsarist authorities had separated in 1912 from the territorial unit called the Polish Kingdom. This integral part of Poland is not integrated into Ukraine but into a new political entity called Galicia. To demonstrate that Russians do not always have to be imperialist, independent Lithuania is—possibly by error—preserved. Belarus is not as fortunate, of course. The Russian political planners also propose far-reaching geopolitical transformations in other parts of the European continent. Thus, for instance, it is proposed to divide Italy into three parts (the Northern League, Southern Italy, and Sicily). Such countries as Bosnia and Herzegovina are to be eliminated, split between Croatia and Serbia, as well as Kosovo. On the other hand, new entities, such as Transcarpathian Ruthenia and Bukovina, appear on the map. Great changes—which are not correlated in any sensible manner with either historical or ethnic patterns—are also postulated for the Hungarian-Romanian borderland.

It is not worthwhile to ponder the details of this wishful design, which shows the historical and geographic ignorance of its creators. Of more importance is the non-substantive aspect of this territorial concept, namely, that it has been formally accepted and endorsed by the Izborsk Club. This fact is witnessed by the title of the document, namely: “Plan of the Izborsk Club on the Division of Eastern Europe between Germany and Russia—May 15, 2017.” The explanatory text accompanying the document’s cartographic illustration clearly indicates the intentions of the project designers. The primary goal is to provide the basis for an agreement between Russia and Germany as to the division of Europe, including, first of all, the reduction of Poland’s territory. Poland, in fact, is the biggest loser in this proposed territorial division, with close to one third of its territory being incorporated into Germany and into a new state called Galicia. The territory that Poland would lose is currently inhabited by some 12 million people, of whom roughly 99% are Poles. The authors do not specify the fate of this population, which would lose its national state. The demographic and ethnic issues are completely ignored in the document, since they would uncover the nonsense and unrealistic nature of the entire concept.

The document formulates the offer with respect to Germany as follows:

The alliance of Russia with Germany will allow the latter to incorporate the territories lost as a result of war: the Sudetan Mountains, Silesia, and East Prussia. Poland, Hungary, and Romania will take Bukovina, Galicia, and

Volhynia from Ukraine. Germany and Poland will divide Lithuania among themselves, each side taking half. Russia will regain “Pribaltika” [the Baltic States], New Russia [Eastern Ukraine], and Transnistria [the part of Moldova now under separatist administration], and will also establish a protectorate over Belarus. Germany will provide funds to Russia for new industrialization. This is the Izborsk Club’s design for a new peace in Eastern Europe” (Plan 2017, p. 1).

The quotation is in disagreement with the map contained in the document. Yet it is not geographical precision that is important here—since the creators treat this aspect quite nonchalantly—but the ideological message of the document. With respect to the liquidation or division of sovereign political entities only the imperialist interests of Russia count, with no legal or ethical norms restraining these interests. In order to lure Germany into the Russian-German alliance, the creators add consecutive political encouragements: “In effect of the realization of the agreement on the territorial division of Eastern Europe between Germany and Russia, Germany will rid itself of political control by the United States and will regain great-nation status.”

In a further part of the text it is noted that countries such as Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania will belong to the zone of German domination (Plan 2017, p. 5). This kind of formulation is reminiscent of the dreadful pact concluded in Moscow between von Ribbentrop and Molotov on August 23, 1939 and then confirmed on September 28, 1939. The plan considered here—which clearly refers to the criminal Ribbentrop-Molotov pact serving to advance World War II—was elaborated in 2017 by contemporary Russian nationalists. It can be stated with full conviction that they are acting in complete separation from the realities of the modern world and Europe. The Russian authors of the design appear unaware that the situation in Europe today is entirely different from the situation in 1939 and that these sort of formulations—stipulating the division of territory into zones of influence—are not only compromising but also ridiculous.

The Izborsk Club is planning a new political and territorial reorganization of Eastern Europe. Their ultimate proposal is presented in yet another colored cartogram (see Map no. 3). The most interesting element of the plan is constituted by the outline of the suggested boundaries of Ukraine. This country is supposed to lose, to the benefit of Russia, a broadly conceived “New Russia,”

Map 3

Plan for the reorganization of borders in Eastern Europe,
by the Izborsk Club



which is constituted, according to the design, by all of eastern and southern Ukraine, including Odessa, down to the border with Romania. The very heartland of Ukraine would also be split into two parts, that is, Ukraine and Galicia. As in the preceding map, Belarus is no longer an independent country, and is incorporated into Russia. In the framework of the remaining territorial acquisitions, the whole eastern part of Latvia, with Dyneburg (the so-called Dvinsk district), would be incorporated into Russia. Estonia is supposed to give to Russia the area to the west of Narva. The Georgian state is to be punished and divided into two parts, with Abkhazia remaining

within the boundaries of Russia. The map shows the separate Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia). Yet the accompanying text does not confirm this state of affairs, and is worth quoting:

Russia, if the agreement with Germany is reached, gains control over the Baltic states, New Russia, Moldavia [Moldova], and central Little Russia [i.e., Ukraine]. Russia increases, as well, its influence over Belarus, extending protection over Belarus against the threat of a “Maidan” and a change of the authorities. Russia is fully freed from Anglo-Saxon pressure in regard to the Eastern European countries (Plan 2017, p. 4).

In view of the provision of maps, the more detailed interpretation of the text is unnecessary. If this kind of plan were to be prepared and had appeared in any other country than Russia, it would have been completely neglected and treated as the product of fantasy and political adventurism. Here, however, we are not dealing only with the ideas of a few dozen randomly assembled persons. The members of the Izborsk Club represent a broad collective body involved with the political elite of Russia. The state plays the decisive political role in Russia and has many centuries of imperial traditions and ambitions. Thus the document should not be overlooked. It must be made known in all the countries surrounding Russia; Russia's geopolitical intentions must be widely available. The authors of the plan considered here are convinced that they are faithfully relating political reality, and that their projections conform to the requirements of rational and logical thinking. Moreover, they assume that realization of their projects lies within the political, military, and economic capacities of Russia. Nevertheless, fulfillment of this kind of vision is entirely improbable. The authors of the document in question are incapable of understanding this quite obvious fact. The critical attitude of western societies with respect to imperial rhetoric is conceived solely as the effect of anti-Russian phobias and lack of European understanding for the scale of wrong inflicted upon the Russian nation due to the disintegration of the USSR.

First of all, the fundamental fact should not be disregarded that the said cartographic and political document is not the result of a coincidence of random circumstances. It is being propagated with the endorsement of the leading activists of the Izborsk Club. This Club enjoys wide esteem in Russia and is supported by numerous Russian intellectuals. The authors of the concept are publicly well known, occupy high positions in the administration, and hold academic titles. They represent a state that has great military power,

including nuclear weapons, at its disposal. Projects like this one, which call for changes in political boundaries, are by no means just verbal speculation. They may engender an essential threat to international security. It is important to be acquainted with them as they are indicative of the specific political atmosphere that reigns in Russia. This atmosphere should give rise to apprehension, or even fright, since in such an atmosphere opinion-forming circles may start to be dominated by ideology rather than by political pragmatism. This is surprising, because, traditionally, Russian considerations concerning political science and geopolitics have been characterized by a deliberate and conservative attitude. It is hard to establish unambiguously to what extent the views of the Izborsk Club are shared by the highest authorities of the Russian Federation. Still, it is quite telling, and worthy of closer attention, that the Club receives very substantial financial support from the Russian state budget. All this suggests that the activity of the Izborsk Club ought to be constantly monitored, since all kinds of far-reaching plans and geopolitical prophecies, even those that are perfectly absurd, may start to be realized when they gain strong, unyielding, and unrelenting designers and supporters, and then executors.

CONCLUSIONS

This article presents and interprets information about the so-called Izborsk Club, which was created in September 2012 in the Russian town of Izborsk. The Club brings together well-known Russian political scientists, historians, geographers, and political activists to plan the geopolitical future of Russia. As part of its interdisciplinary research, the Club advances various concepts of future border changes and the territorial expansion of the Russian state. This article outlines one of these territorial visions, related to the area located in central Europe between the Baltic, the Adriatic, and the Black Sea, and mainly concerning Poland and its nearest neighbors. According to the plan published and disseminated by the Izborsk Club, the territory of future Poland is to be seriously reduced and divided between Imperial Russia and a powerful Germany. The above article is very critical of such unrealistic—even utopian—and belligerent projects. They have little chance of being implemented, but they create an atmosphere of uncertainty and hostility between European nations. For this reason, they must be known and should not be underestimated. The original

Russian maps made and published as part of the Izborsk Club activities are an integral part of the article.

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